

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #257: Starting Over After a Binge

Hi! Quick reminder that registration for The Stop Binge Eating Program is closing this Friday, July 7th of 2023 at 10am ET.

Go to coachkir.com/group to get all the most up to date info about the program and to register and if you have any questions that aren't answered on that page, email them to info@coachkir.com.

And I really mean that. Small questions, big questions, multiple questions, if you have any, don't leave them unanswered and don't leave yourself wondering. If you want to know something about the program, just ask. That email inbox is always open for you.

So if this is something you want to do, if you want my direct help, come and get it! These groups are always full of the most amazing people and they just keep on continuing to amaze me with what they accomplish. Come be one of those people.

Come be a person who commits themselves to making a binge-free life happen for them.

It's so much easier to stay committed when you're in a program vs doing this on your own. So doing this can make it that much easier to not quit if it gets hard, or if you get stuck, or if you can't figure something out, especially because you'll have me there to help you stay in the game and figure it all out.

So again, go to coachkir.com/group to register, you'll get immediate access to The Stop Binge Eating Course before the program officially begins, and then once it does, you'll go all-in on changing your eating habits and your life.

It's going to be so awesome.

Okay, now onto today's topic. Starting over after a binge.

When you're working on stopping binge eating, it is likely that something like this will happen.

You won't binge for whatever you consider to be a significant amount of time, maybe it's a few days, a week, a few weeks, or a month, and you'll be thinking that you're making good progress.

You're changing and you're doing what you want to be doing and it's pretty exciting.

But then, for whatever reason, you binge.

Now of course, for most people, that would be pretty frustrating.

When you're trying to not do something, and you've been on point about not doing it, and then you do it, it makes sense that you would be disappointed, annoyed, or something along those lines.

And it's okay to feel that way. It's normal to feel that way.

But a problem I see people fall into often is that when this happens, they then start thinking that now they have to start over.

And that for sure doesn't feel good.

When you think you've come so far and now you're back at the beginning, it's going to feel very discouraging, maybe even daunting, and sometimes there's some hopelessness in there too, especially if this has happened several times.

If you keep seeing yourself do well and then go back to the beginning then of course you're going to feel that way.

And thinking this way, can also make it harder for you to get back to the amazing work you'd been doing.

When you think you have to start over, after you've already done so much work, and when you thought you'd come so far, and if it took a lot of focused effort to get there, then you're going to feel discouraged and it's going to feel daunting and when that happens, you've not going to feel driven to start over. So it takes you awhile to get yourself to do it. Probably a lot longer than if you weren't thinking of it as starting over.

When you do well, and then you binge, which happens to most people at least once, but usually a few or several times as you go through this process, you don't have to think of it as starting over and I highly recommend you don't.

And not only do you not have to think of it as starting over but truthfully, you simply aren't.

Whatever you have learned about yourself, whatever mental skills you have acquired throughout the process, you have not lost them if you binge.

You still have them.

Now, maybe you'll need a refresher on what you've learned but, it's a refresher on what you already know, you're not needing to start learning it fresh without any previous knowledge like you once did before. You're just revisiting and reminding.

And maybe you'll need to work on those skills again but, it's like riding a bike.

Back in 2015 I rode a bike for the first time in probably decades. And I didn't have to rebuild all my bike riding skills. I didn't have to put training wheels back on. I was a little off balance and wobbly but it didn't take long to get steady again.

The same will happen for your eating.

You might be a little wobbly at first but you'll get right back to where you were.

Or an even better example because it's totally mental and not physical like riding a bike, is learning a language.

When I was living in California and working in restaurants, I worked with a lot of people who spoke Spanish as their first language and I learned so much from them. I would ask them how to say certain words or phrases and write them down and I'd practice speaking Spanish with them. I would speak Spanish with them as much as I could. And I was making good progress, at least with restaurant talk and some personal talk.

Then I stopped working in restaurants and I didn't have anyone in my life at that time to regularly practice Spanish with. So I didn't and I forgot a lot of it.

But then, a few years later, I started learning again using a language learning app and even though it had been years, I wasn't starting over. Sure I had forgotten a lot but I also hadn't forgotten a lot and what I did forget, once it was presented to me, it was easier for me to remember than it was when I first learned it.

And now, it's again been a few years since I used that app regularly, and now that I'm talking about it, maybe I should get back to it, but anyway, I still know that I have not lost all of my knowledge. If I do go back on that app or if I try to speak Spanish with someone, all would not be lost because I wasn't using it. There's a lot that's still there.

Now, with this example, I was taking years of breaks and I still wasn't starting over.

But when people are bingeing, they'll have one binge and think they're starting over. One day of not doing what they'd been doing.

Or even if it's been a week, or a month of not doing it, they'll think they're starting over.

But they're not. They can't be. They've gained far too much to lose it in a day, a week, or a month.

And maybe even a year.

So how I like to think of it, instead of starting over, is that you just took a break.

You took a break from doing the work and now you're going to get back to it.

It's like if you're driving somewhere and you're doing good on time, you're progressing well, and then you hit a detour. Or you have an unexpected stop for food. Yes you've gone off the path you were on, yes you stopped going straight toward your destination, but when you get back to your original route, you are not starting over. You're just picking up where you left off.

When you stop doing the work to not binge, and you do binge, when you get to doing the work again you're just picking up where you left off.

And honestly, if you're doing it right, when you binge, you can actually add to your progress.

What I mean by that is if you're learning from the binge, learning something about yourself, about what you need to work on, about what needs more focus from you, or something you've maybe forgotten.

The binge shows us something that we need to know, that we need to refresh on, or that we need to get back to doing.

So if a binge happens, you're not starting over, you're getting back to work with a clear task that you need to work on.

Now, one thing that can get in the way of people getting on board with this idea that you're not starting over is when they're counting days of not bingeing.

Now, I have counted days, I actually still count years just as a reference, and most people count days, weeks, months, years as well.

There's nothing wrong with that but again, starting back at Day 1 doesn't have to mean that you're starting over with everything.

I haven't binged in over 6 years and if I binged today, I sure as heck wouldn't think I'm starting over.

Would I be back at Day 1 if I chose to count that way? Sure. But starting at Day 1 doesn't have to mean starting all over with everything.

I have far too much knowledge about binge eating and about myself to be starting over completely.

And with that, if you're someone who counts days, and you don't want to stop counting days, I'd recommend you also count frequency.

Frequency is a far more useful barometer for measuring progress.

It can be so much better for you mentally if instead of looking at home many times you've gone back to Day one, that you look at how frequently your binges are happening.

And even better, how frequently you're feeling urges and how frequently you're allowing those urges instead of giving into them.

You might go back to Day 1 several times but, what if you're feeling urges less frequently? Or are giving in to them less frequently? That's progress.

So if you do well for awhile and then binge, you're not starting all over.

This is a mental process and that binge did not take away all that you've gained mentally.

You might have taken a break from doing the mental work and applying what you know but, that's okay.

You're going to learn something from it and get back to the work.

And simply, don't call it starting over because you're not.

Even if you didn't do well one day, you're not starting over the next.

We want to get away from that way of thinking especially when it falls into all or nothing where you're deciding that you're giving up on today and starting over tomorrow, or Monday, or on the first of the month.

Sure you may be getting back to it but you're not going back to the beginning.

This also makes me think of something my friend told me about a dance studio she went to.

They would rehearse their dance for competition and as soon as someone made a mistake, they would start over. It would obviously take forever for them to get to the end of the dance and maybe they wouldn't even get there by the end of their class time.

I understand what they were doing, trying to perfect their dance for competition, but that's not what we're doing here.

We're not starting over with every mistake. We keep going.

We're continuing on and taking note of the mistake to work on later.

That's what will be much more effective when it comes to binge eating.

And it's way less pressure to be perfect and accepting imperfection is also going to be way more effective for stopping binge eating.

So if you do well and then you binge, you're not starting over.

You took a break, now learn from the binge and get back to work.

And last thing. If you want help with getting back to work, if you find it hard for you to get back to work, or if you have a hard time finding the lesson in your binge or find that you keep repeating the same mistake over and over and can't figure out how to stop doing it, then come join me in The Stop Binge Eating Program where I will help you with all of it.

Again, registration for this round is closing this Friday, July 7th of 2023 at 10am ET and you can register at coachkir.com/group and send any questions you have that aren't answered on that page to info@coachkir.com.

Alright, that's all for today, I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye!